

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 NIC-01 /070 W

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P R 251018Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 805

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MUSCAT 102

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MU, PFOR

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SULTAN QABOOS; USE OF MASIRAH ISLAND

REF: STATE 16451

1. RECOMMEND DEPARTMENT ADD AMMAN AND MANAMA TO DISTRIBUTION REFTEL. COMIDEASTFOR AND USCINCEUR MAY ALSO BE APPROPRIATE.
2. PLEASE REPEAT TO MUSCAT STATE 15705, WHICH NOT YET RECEIVED HERE AND WHICH APPARENTLY CONTAINS CURRENT PRESS GUIDANCE.
3. BRITISH EMBASSY MUSCAT LEARNED FROM REUTERS THAT OMANI FOREIGN MINISTRY ON JAN. 22 RELEASED FOL TEXT RELATED TO MASIRAH AND CIRCULATED IT BY TELEX TO OMANI EMBASSIES ABROAD. QTE OF LATE CERTAIN HIRED PRESS MEDIA HAVE LAUNCHED A SINISTER CAMPAIGN OF PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE SULTANATE OF OMAN CONCERNING THE ACQUISITION OF THE RIGHTS BY THE UNITED STATES OF USING MASIRAH ISLAND. PARA. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN WHILE STRONGLY CONDEMNING THIS PROPAGANDA AFFIRMS THAT THE NEWS CIRCULATED RECENTLY IS COMPLETELY DEVOID OF TRUTH. UNQTE. BRITISH EMBOFF THEREUPON CALLED TO ATTENTION OF FOREIGN MINISTRY FACT
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THAT FCO NEWS DEPARTMENT IN LONDON HAS CONFIRMED TO PRESS,

FOLLOWING JAN. 19 PRESS REPORTS IN LONDON, THAT USG HAS ASKED FOR OCCASIONAL USE OF AIRFIELD FACILITIES AT MASIRAH AND THAT HMG IS CONSIDERING THIS REQUEST IN CONJUNCTION WITH OMANI AND USG AUTHORITIES. BRITISH ALSO TOLD FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT IF FCO IS ASKED ABOUT 1958 MASIRAH AGREEMENT THEY WILL SAY IT IS CONFIDENTIAL MATTER BETWEEN BRITISH AND OMANI GOVERNMENTS, AND WILL EMPHASIZE THAT MASIRAH IS MERELY RAF STAGING POST AND NOT A "BRITISH BASE." FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTION WAS TO NOD UNDERSTANDING OF ALL THIS AND TO MENTION THAT IT UNDERSTOOD FONMIN ZAWAWI WOULD BE MAKING A STATEMENT ON MATTER IN LONDON ABOUT JAN. 24.

4. COMMENT: NEITHER SULTAN QABOOS NOR ZAWAWI HAS BEEN IN OMAN SINCE EARLY DECEMBER AND WE CANNOT BE SURE HOW WELL THEY ARE KEEPING FOREIGN MINISTRY INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS ON MASIRAH QUESTION. WOULD BE LOGICAL TO EXPECT BOTH SULTAN AND ZAWAWI BACK SHORTLY, BUT WE HAVE NO HARD INFORMATION ON THEIR ETA.
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